



## ***United States Attorney District of New Jersey***

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### **SOMERSET, NEW JERSEY MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FRAUD, ADMITS RECEIVING MILLIONS IN UNEARNED FEDERAL INCOME TAX REFUND CHECKS**

TRENTON, N.J. – A Somerset, N.J., man pleaded guilty today to a charge arising from his role in a conspiracy to file thousands of fraudulent federal income tax returns, admitting the fake returns caused the IRS to issue over \$3 million in unearned tax refund checks, United States Attorney Paul J. Fishman announced.

Adebowale Sheba, 39, pleaded guilty to an Information charging him with one count of conspiracy to defraud the United States. The defendant entered his guilty plea before United States District Judge Freda L. Wolfson in Trenton federal court.

According to documents filed in this case and statements made during Sheba's guilty plea proceeding:

Beginning in January 2005, Sheba, along with co-conspirators, purchased the personal identifying information of hundreds of victims of identity theft – including their names, dates of birth, and Social Security numbers. Sheba and his co-conspirators used that information to file phony tax returns with the IRS, with the objective of generating false and fraudulent income tax refund checks issued by the United States Department of the Treasury.

Sheba and his co-conspirators used their home addresses or other addresses they controlled on the returns so that refund checks would be issued to them. In total, Sheba and his co-conspirators used approximately 41 separate addresses for this purpose.

Once Sheba and his co-conspirators received the checks, they deposited them into approximately 24 separate bank accounts they controlled. Sheba and his co-conspirators then made cash withdrawals from the accounts or directed the money into other accounts.

Between January 2005 and October 2009, Sheba and his co-conspirators filed thousands of tax returns that, combined, sought nearly \$11.5 million in refund checks. As a result of the filings, the IRS actually released approximately \$3.2 million in checks to the co-conspirators.

The count to which Sheba pleaded guilty carries a maximum potential penalty of 10 years in prison and a fine of the greatest of \$250,000 or twice the loss or gain from the conspiracy. He is scheduled to be sentenced on March 1, 2011.

Three others were charged with Sheba in the original Complaint: Adeyemisi Toyusini,

a/k/a “Johnson Coker,” 48, of Old Bridge, N.J.; Adedemi Adenni, 51, of Lumberton, N.J.; and Taiwo Daisy, 40, of Roselle, N.J. Adenni pleaded guilty in October; the case against the other two remains pending.

U.S. Attorney Fishman praised the United States Postal Inspection Service, under the direction of Postal Inspector in Charge David Collins; the Internal Revenue Service – Criminal Investigation, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Victor W. Lessoff; and the Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Edward J. Ryan of the New York Field Division.

The government is represented by Assistant United States Attorney Lee Vartan of the U.S. Attorney’s Office Economic Crimes Unit in Newark.

As for Toyusini and Daisy, the charges and allegations contained in the Complaint are merely accusations, and the defendants are considered innocent unless and until proven guilty.

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Defense counsel: Roy Greenman, Esq., Union, N.J.